

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of The Study

Literary is a work written from someone's creative thinking. In the making process literary works often take themes or ideas from the phenomena of life around the community and also the events experienced by the writer himself. But, not infrequently also the ideas taken come from the writer's own imagination which is then conveyed in stories that have a relationship with phenomena in society. Because it raises such story ideas, literary are usually easily accepted by readers because indirectly the contents of these literary are what they normally experience in their daily lives that they cannot express for certain reasons. This is the uniqueness of literary works that convey a "thought" in its own way (Budianta, 2003, p. 7).

One of the themes of literary works that are closely related to life in society is the theme of the patriarchal culture. Patriarchal culture is a system that has existed in society since time immemorial and has become a tradition for certain societies. So close to the community that we ourselves sometimes do not even realize that we have implemented the system in our daily lives. In fact this system causes social inequality between men and women. Men always become dominant and women must obey all orders of men. In other words, it creates a stereotyped gender that increasingly restricts women.

Patriarchy according to Bhasin (Christanti, 2016, p. 13) is a system in society that places men in a higher position than women, men are more dominant in the social, political, and other aspects of life, and also women are part of men so that men have a complete control of women. According to Jung (Handayani, 2008, p. 164) Men and women are basically the same, they only have psychological differences. The difference is that there is culture in society, which then leads to differences between men and women.

A South Korean novelist, Cho Nam Joo, made a literary work in the form of a novel with the theme of a patriarchal system that has become a tradition in South Korean society. Before becoming a novelist Cho Nam Joo was a script writer for a television

program in Korea, who then had to stop and stay at home because of giving birth to her child. Her novel entitled "*Kim Ji Young, Born 1982*" was a controversy and getting hated by antifeminists because it was seen as presenting a distorted and subjective view, as well as making negative and sexist generalizations about men. In writing this novel Cho only needed two months because the contents of the novel were based on what she saw in society and what she felt while living her life.

Kim Ji Young, Born 1982 is her third novel. It has a profound impact of patriarchal culture on gender inequality and gender stereotype in Korean society, and has been translated into 18 languages. This novel was published in 2016 with the setting in South Korea. It is centered on the life journey of the female lead named Kim Ji Young who was born on April 1 1982; she is an office worker who must be a housewife after she has a child. She has a mental disorder due to the gender discrimination that she gets from childhood till her marriage life now. It is because of the patriarchal culture in South Korea that still exists today. The novel is divided into 6 chapters in which each chapter will tell the story of Kim Ji Young's life from her childhood to life after marriage and having a child.

This novel tells the story of the main character named Kim Ji Young who is depressed because of life pressures, discrimination and gender inequality by her social environment. The change began to emerge after Kim gave birth to her child and was forced to quit work to become a housewife who takes care of her child and husband, Jung Dae Hyun. The person who first realized this was her own husband who initially thought she was only joking by imitating their family or people closest to them but the longer the symptoms got worse and made Kim almost lose her identity. For example, in one day Kim acts like their grandmother and a friend who has passed away, then when she wakes up in the next morning she will not remember anything she has done. After consulting with a psychiatrist, it was discovered that Kim had a severe postpartum depression.

During her childhood and school Kim often received unfair treatment by friends, teachers, and even her own father. For example, when she was harassed by her desk-mate, she reported it to her teacher but he just laughed and said if things were natural and it seemed like her desk-mates liked him. One day when she came home late and almost

became a victim of sexual harassment, her father who was supposed to protect her even scolded her and thought it was her fault for dressing immodestly, even though what Kim was wearing at that time was a uniform dress covered by a thick jacket. Until the time she started working, she still received unfair treatment from her office. No matter how kind and how good her performance is, she has never been promoted to promotion because her superiors think that if women are given high positions they will eventually leave because they have to get pregnant and take care of children. Not much different from her previous life, after she married she was also pressured by her big family (parents-in-law and her parents) to have children immediately, to be a good wife, to be a good daughter-in-law, and etc.

In the final chapter of this novel, it is told that Kim began to get medical help by a psychiatrist met by her husband. She began to realize that after having a child and releasing all of her work for the family, it turns out she was experiencing postnatal depression. Her mother-in-law who heard that also felt guilty because she often pressured Kim to be the perfect daughter-in-law and could do everything, at a family gathering she shared all the housework with everyone so that it did not impose everything on Kim. Kim's mother also feels guilty and regretful because "how can she does not know if her daughter struggle from many pressure and depression." After that she decides to visit Kim more often and listen to all her complaints. As for her husband (Dae Hyun), now he pays more attention to Kim and has always been a support system so Kim returns to the way she was and also frees her if she wants to work again.

When this novel first publishing, in 2016, this novel is an ordinary novel that is not widely known by people, but then it changed when some Korean celebrities openly showed themselves if they supported the feminist movement until the novel finally reached the President of South Korea which then immediately became a controversial novel and make the public in South Korea divided into the pro and contra readers. This happens because gender issues are still very sensitive in South Korean society. Gender inequality and discrimination against women in the world of work are common. For those who are pro to this novel is because they feel relate to what is conveyed by Cho Nam Joo through the role of Kim Ji Young that she made. Almost all women in South Korea have

experienced the same thing that was experienced by Kim in the novel. While the opposing camp came from a group of men who did not accept what Cho wrote in her novel.

Despite all the pros and cons responses to this novel, since it was released in October 2016 to November 2018 this book has sold more than one million copies and became the best-selling fiction book of all time, breaking the record of selling the previous novel entitled *"Please Look After Mom"* by Shin's Kyung Sook. This novel also translates into some languages including English and Indonesia. Because of this achievement the novel was finally adapted to be a movie in 2019 with the same title and won several awards.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the writer chose the novel *"Kim Ji Young, Born 1982"* as the research data because the novel implies a lot of patriarchal cultural phenomena in South Korea that cause discrimination and gender inequality against women. Discrimination occurs because of the stereotype and inequality acts in society that women should be a housewives and men who make a living are men. This cause working women often get unfair treatment, making it difficult to improve themselves.

Beside the content of this novel, it also has a unique plot because the writer using the flash-forward and flashback plot. This can be seen from how the time frame used in telling the story of Kim Ji Young's life, where in the early chapter the time frame described is when Kim had children and was diagnosed with postpartum disorder. Then in the next chapter set the time back in her childhood and the period before she was married. And on the last chapter it back to the time when Kim was married and started receiving medical treatment. In this novel also illustrated how the character changes of the female lead who was originally cheerful, to be moody and more quite, and finally diagnosed as a someone who have mental illness because of the various pressures that she experienced on her whole life.

The author in this study entitled *"An Analysis of Patriarchal Culture Portrayed in The Novel Kim Ji Young, Born 1982: Feminist Theory"* with the reason because the novel

clearly tells about the impact of patriarchal culture in someone's life so that it attracts the author to analyze it using feminist theory. The selection of this theory is based on problems the main character depicted in this novel is patriarchal culture which is closely related to feminist issue. In addition, the authors also hope that by using this theory the writer can understand the effect of patriarchal culture in South Korean society that is portrayed through the lives of the main female characters.

1.2 Research Questions

- 1) How is the description of the patriarchal culture of the female characters in this novel, which includes gender stereotypes and gender inequality?
- 2) What are the impacts of the patriarchal culture for the female characters in the novel?
- 3) Why did the writer of this novel bring up this topic in her novel?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on problem statement above, the objective of the Study are as follows:

- 1) To describe the patriarchal culture of female characters including stereotypes and gender inequality in the novel *Kim Ji Young, Born 1982*.
- 2) To explain the impact of patriarchal culture on the main female character in the novel *Kim Ji Young, Born 1982*.
- 3) To reveal the reason why the novelist brought up this topic in her novel.